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LEBANON/U.S.  
EMBASSY ATTACK

HARTMAN: Joining me right now, Adm. Stansfield Turner, who was director of the Central Intelligence Agency during the Carter administration, and he joins me here in New York. Good morning, Admiral. ADM. STANSFIELD TURNER: Good morning, David.

HARTMAN: A breakdown in security, do you think? TURNER: Yes. I think there were two lapses of security here, the one you mentioned, that there wasn't a physical barrier in front of that maze that a guard had to actually open, that a car was not able to get in and just weave its way through. Secondly, I do not understand, if the reports are correct, David, why we had pulled the United States Marines off those guard posts. We should not trust American lives in a terribly incendiary situation like that to foreign guards.

HARTMAN: Admiral, what, is it possible... I asked Mr. Armacost how possible is it to guarantee safety in that particular situation given the terrorist attacks, given our lack of ability to understand the people and what's going on. TURNER: Not very likely that you can fully protect people in this type of a situation. We could go and start from scratch on a bare piece of ground and build almost a fortress for an embassy, but even then they may lob artillery shells into it, they may come with helicopters or airplanes and suicide attacks. It just is a very difficult situation. I think that we have to think considerably about pulling out.

HARTMAN: Well, Mr. Armacost just said that we have so many vital interests there that it's not in the U.S. interest to pull out. TURNER: In the first place, I don't believe we have a vital interest in Lebanon. We can't let this push us out of the Middle East entirely, but Lebanon is not that vital because we've already pulled out all but 20 people, as he said, and we've got 80 people in there protecting the 20 or rebuilding old damage. That's a losing proposition, David.

HARTMAN: What about the Lebanese? How much of this responsibility...? You just said that we shouldn't leave our security for our people to Lebanese. On the other hand, to what extent do the Lebanese people have responsibility to protect the Americans? TURNER: They have the basic responsibility. They are the only ones who could really bring some kind of order here. You remember years ago we had the Bader Meinhoff terrorists in Germany. The Germans got those under control. Why?

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